

WHAT THE SOLDIER THINKS

A Monthly Digest of War Department Studies on the Attitudes of American Troops

~~Classification Canceled~~



Auth. of Dir., Inf. & Ed. Div., A.S.F.

D. D. B.

Date 28 SEPT '45

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WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington 25, D. C., 25 March 1944.

What the Soldier Thinks, Number 4, A Monthly Digest of War Department Studies on the Attitudes of American Troops, is published for the information and guidance of all concerned.

[A. G. 061.05 (3 Jan 44).]

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WHAT COMBAT VETERANS THINK OF ARMY TRAINING

**Infantrymen from the front lines examine their pre-combat training
in the light of their battle experiences**

Source: Study of a group of Infantry combat veterans.

The acid test of a military training program comes on the battlefield. There the long weeks of marches and firing problems, of scrambling over rough terrain, of setting up and solving field problems are drawn upon by soldiers who are "playing for keeps." Through them, the military training program is evaluated in terms of enemy killed and wounded and positions won, or of losses and failures to gain objectives.

Probably no two military campaigns are alike. In the area studied, our Infantrymen faced special problems of terrain and weather which tested their training in a unique way. At the same time, there is much in their experiences which is meaningful in relation to the content and conduct of military training programs at home. Not the least of its usefulness is its application in improv-

ing the morale of troops now being trained. Trainees will be less likely to complain about certain unpleasant aspects of the training program if they are shown how important those aspects are proving to combat troops.

A special study has just been completed among Infantry combat veterans, men who had just come out of the line, many of them having seen action as recently as two days before being questioned. They were asked to rate how well the training they had received before seeing action prepared them for action. Their answers indicate that many of them feel that some phases of the military training program are not stressed enough, that still other phases are given too much emphasis. Several significant gaps in their training are revealed and some aspects of the program are endorsed by a majority of the men as having about the right amount of emphasis.

MANY MEN THINK THEIR PRE-COMBAT TRAINING IN THE U.S. WAS TOO EASY

QUESTION: "In view of your combat experience to date, do you think the Army training you got in the United States was too tough, about right, or not tough enough?"

PER CENT OF MEN SAYING...

...Too tough.

7%

...About right.

51%

...Not tough enough

30%

...Undecided or no answer . . .

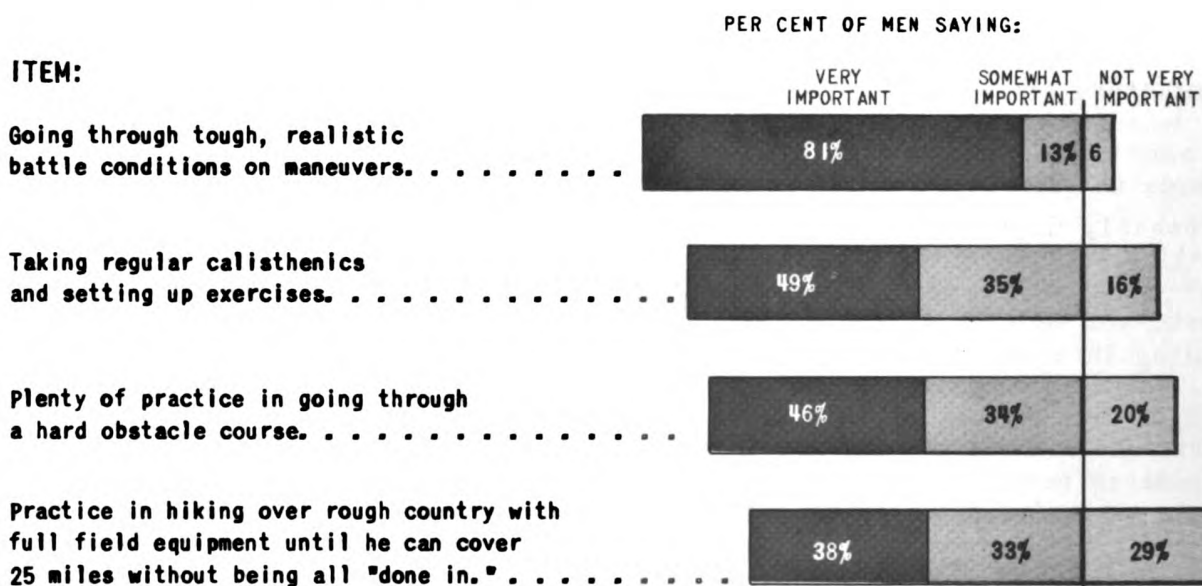
12%

Before being questioned about specific aspects of their training, the men were asked to rate their training as a whole. *Fully three men in ten testify that the training they received in the United States was "not tough enough." Only one man in 14 says it was "too tough."*

This tendency of combat veterans to express the need for tough military

training before combat is also evident in the manner in which they rate the importance of four activities in the training program that soldiers in the states often gripe about. The four activities --tough realistic maneuvers, calisthenics, obstacle courses, and long hikes with full field equipment--are all rated as "very important" or "somewhat important" by most of the men.

QUESTION: "HOW IMPORTANT DO YOU THINK THE FOLLOWING THINGS ARE FOR A SOLDIER TO GET IN HIS TRAINING BEFORE HE COMES OVERSEAS?"



The importance of stamina and physical strength in combat is borne out by the four bar graphs above. Battle is hard on the body. In testifying to the significance of those training activities which are designed to toughen soldiers, the combat veterans are providing persuasive ammunition which officers can use to convince troops in training of the importance of putting all they can into physical conditioning activities.

In addition to rating the above-mentioned training activities, the men were asked to rate a check-list of 22 training items according to whether they had had "too much," "about the right amount" or "too little" training in these items.

A majority of the men testify that they have had too little training in each of 13 different items on the list, and in 7 others there is a substantial minority who say they have had insufficient training.

The items can be grouped roughly into five categories:

1. Activities concerned with learning about enemy weapons and tactics.
2. Activities concerned with tactical training in units.
3. Activities concerned with learning proper cover and concealment.
4. Activities concerned with orientation.
5. Miscellaneous activities.

The men were instructed:

"Look over each item in the following list and check whether you feel you got too much, about the right amount, or too little of that item in your training before you first went into combat."

Among the five groups of activities, the biggest over-all training insufficiency is in group 1. The chart opposite shows how the men rate the training received in four activities connected with training in enemy weapons and tactics.

TWO IMPORTANT TRAINING NEEDS

Among the items that fall into the miscellaneous group are several which a large majority of men feel are given too little emphasis in the pre-combat training program. The lack of this training had been responsible for many casualties throughout their campaign. *Nine out of ten of the men say that they had too little training in detecting and disarming booby traps and land mines; more than eight out of ten say they had too little training in what to do about trench foot--a war-brought disease which is causing Medical Corps officers great concern.*

A larger percentage of men name these two training items as ones in which they had too little training than name any other item.

TRAINING IN LAND MINES, BOOBY TRAPS, AND DEALING WITH TRENCH FOOT

PER CENT WHO SAY:

ITEM:

Learning how to find and handle land mines and booby traps

90%

What to do about trench foot

85%

TRAINING IN ENEMY WEAPONS AND TACTICS

PER CENT WHO SAY:

ITEM:

TOO LITTLE

Demonstration of enemy weapons and the best defense against them

81%

Demonstration of enemy tactics and the best defense against them

77%

How to operate against different types of enemy defense

76%

Identification of enemy aircraft

63%

OTHER MISCELLANEOUS TRAINING NEEDS

Other miscellaneous items in which most of the men say they have had too little training include "training under live ammunition," "practice firing with live ammunition on moving and surprise targets," and "first aid training." "Map reading and use of the compass," is checked by 45 per cent of the men, and only two other miscellaneous items--"close order drill" and "training in bayonet and other hand to hand fighting"--are checked by fewer men. In fact, two men out of three say they had too much close order drill!

ORIENTATION TRAINING

Two items on the training check-list concern problems of orientation. In testifying about their training in these items, the men indicate that their greatest orientation lack is in the field of

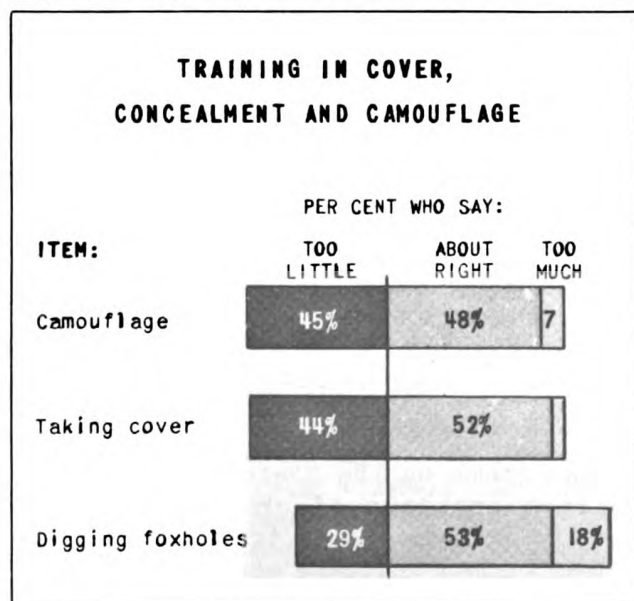
post-war plans. This emphasis on the need for orientation on post-war plans is in keeping with the interest enlisted men have expressed generally in other orientation surveys.

Three out of five men say they have had too little "films, talks and discussions about plans for after the war;" one out of three says he has had too little "films, talks and discussions about the progress of the war."

COVER, CONCEALMENT AND CAMOUFLAGE

One field in which men's training is proving fairly satisfactory in combat is that concerned with cover, concealment, and camouflage. These items make up the only group in which a majority say they have had either too much or about the right amount of training in each item.

The fact that "digging foxholes" is one training item in which most men seem to be getting enough training is particularly important. All indications based on men's free answers to questions about training are that digging deep to protect oneself against enemy fire is a vital skill in combat. For example, in writing in their free and voluntary opinions of the most helpful items in the military training they received before coming overseas, more men mention cover, concealment, and digging in than any other group of items.



MEN NEED MORE TRAINING IN SOLVING TACTICAL PROBLEMS IN UNITS

Five items on the check-list are concerned with tactical training in units. This type of training is heavily drawn upon in combat.

Combat veterans know the importance of such training and many of them feel they should have had more of it before being sent into combat. The way they rate the time spent on items related to unit tactical training is shown in the chart on the following page.

COMMENTS OF THE MEN

In addition to the items on the check-list, the men were asked to write in their answers to the following three questions:

1. Is there any particular kind of training you did not get that you wish you had received before you went into combat?
2. What particular parts of Army training you got before you ever went into combat were the most helpful to you when you went into combat?
3. What particular parts of Army training you got before you ever went into combat were the least helpful to you when you went into combat?

While there is naturally great diversity between the answers written by the men to the three questions, various parts of the training program are singled out by significant numbers of the men as training which they wish they had received, training which was most helpful, and training which was least helpful.

Among items singled out by the men as *most helpful* in combat, the following are most frequently mentioned:

1. Training in cover, concealment, dispersion, and digging in.
2. Training in the use and maintenance of weapons.
3. Tactical training in the field.
4. Night training.
5. Training in amphibious operations.

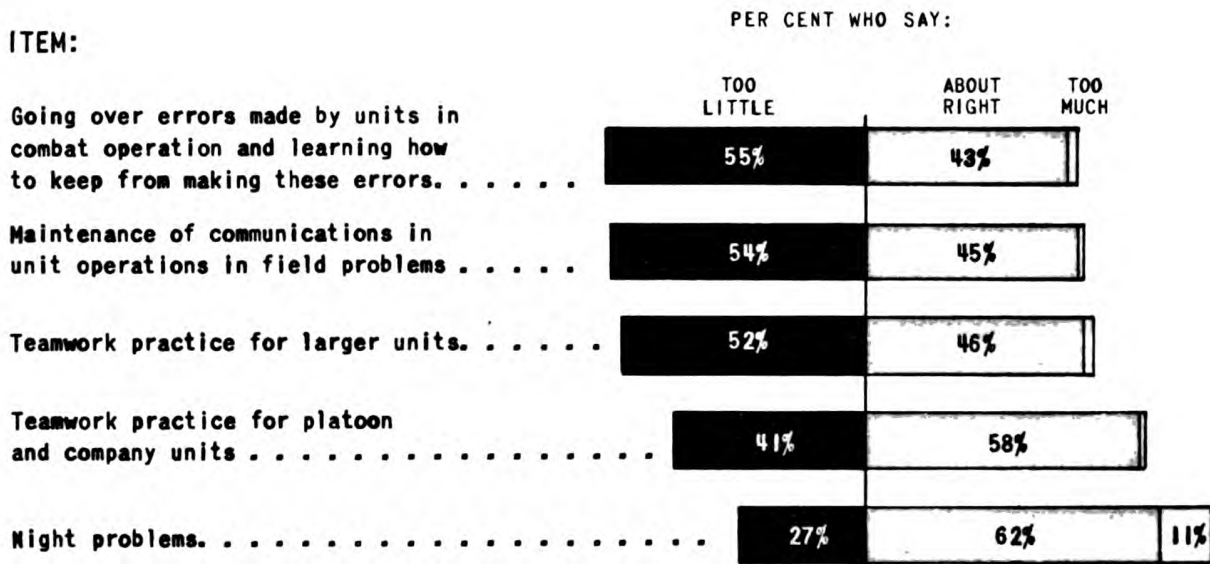
Among items singled out by the men as *least helpful* in combat, the following are most frequently mentioned:

1. Close order drill.
2. Marches and hikes.
3. Military courtesy and inspections.
4. Training in bayonet and hand to hand combat.
5. Gas drill and chemical warfare training.

It should be noted that men's attitudes toward some of the items they say

are "*least helpful*" are influenced by peculiar battle conditions they are encountering. Training in bayonet and hand to hand fighting, for example, is little used in this campaign. Training in marches and hikes is proving relatively unimportant despite the fact that it was most helpful in an earlier campaign. Finally, because the enemy has not used gas, it is only natural that many men should consider their gas training of little help there.

HOW MEN RATE THEIR UNIT TACTICAL TRAINING



Among items mentioned under training they wish they had received, the following are most frequently mentioned; battle training under combat conditions; training in the detection and disarming of booby traps and mines; training in the use and maintenance of weapons; training in enemy weapons and tactics.

Analysis of the opinions these veterans express about their pre-combat training points out that men want and need realistic training in the arts of battle plus physical and mental conditioning which will prepare them to withstand the hardships of battle. Many of the men admit that they took their training too

lightly while in the U.S. Drawing upon their own combat experiences, they are quick to urge troops still in training to learn all they can about their military jobs.

The junior officer especially can use the experiences of these combat veterans to help him in training troops for battle. He can use their arguments to strengthen his own.

It is, of course, true that what these veterans say cannot be considered the last word on training doctrine. They are one group from one front, and it must be remembered how varied are the combat problems of a global war.

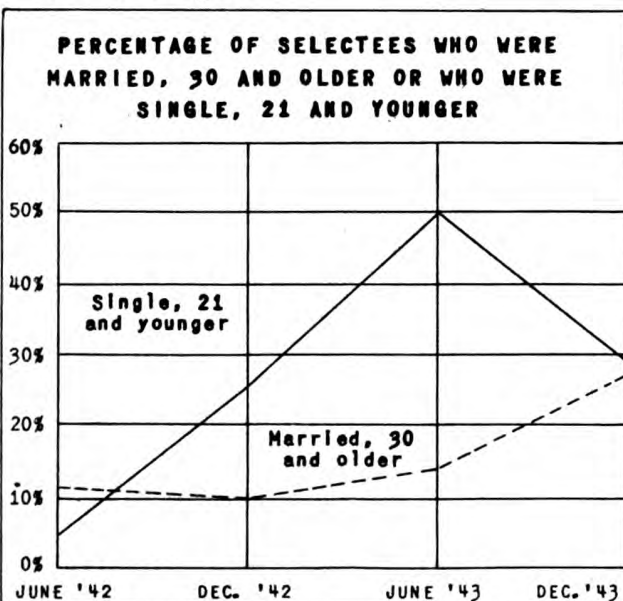
AGE VERSUS YOUTH

A comparison of attitudes of the younger, single men with those of the older, married men

Source: Study of a cross section of enlisted men in Continental U.S. and data from the AGO Machine Records Branch.

Many officers feel that the older, married recruit rates lower than the younger, single recruit in general morale, and that he therefore is a poorer training risk. This attitude deserves special attention now, because in recent months there has been a marked increase in the per cent of older, married selectees and a corresponding decrease in the per cent of younger, single selectees.

In this discussion of the older soldier and how he compares with the younger soldier on certain morale attitudes, data have been limited to married men 30 and older and single men 21 and under, who have been in the Army one year or less and who were selectees. An overwhelming proportion of older soldiers who have been in the Army one year or less are married and younger soldiers who have one year service or less are single.



Just how does the judgment that the older recruit has lower morale than the younger recruit jibe with the facts?

SOME ATTITUDES IN WHICH YOUNG MEN ARE SUPERIOR

Enlisted men 21 and under are superior to enlisted men 30 and over in the following morale-related attitudes.

1. They tend to be more enthusiastic about their role as soldiers.
2. More of them consider themselves to be in good physical shape.
3. A larger percentage of them desire combat duty overseas.
4. They tend to be better adjusted.

SOME ATTITUDES IN WHICH OLDER MEN ARE THE EQUALS OF YOUNGER MEN

Enlisted men 30 or over rate just as high as those 21 and under on the following morale-related attitudes:

1. Over-all, they are equal in their degree of faith in the cause for which we are fighting.
2. An equal percentage of them would not change Army jobs if given a chance.
3. They tend to have just as much pride in outfit.

A POINT OF SUPERIORITY

Older men tend to surpass younger men in their confidence in officers. A larger percentage of them feel that their officers are the kind they would want to serve under in combat. A larger percentage of them also feel that their officers are the kind who are willing to do anything they ask their men to do.

The facts indicate that officers have little reason to be apprehensive about older recruits' morale. Though these men have special problems, they supply the Army with adequate raw material from which to make soldiers--at least from the standpoint of mental attitudes.

LEADERSHIP AND ESPRIT IN FIGHTER SQUADRONS OVERSEAS

How men's attitude toward their squadron commander
is related to their feeling of pride in outfit

Source: Study of enlisted ground crew members
of an overseas Fighter Command.

*What do the men who service our
fighter planes think of their leaders
and their outfits?*

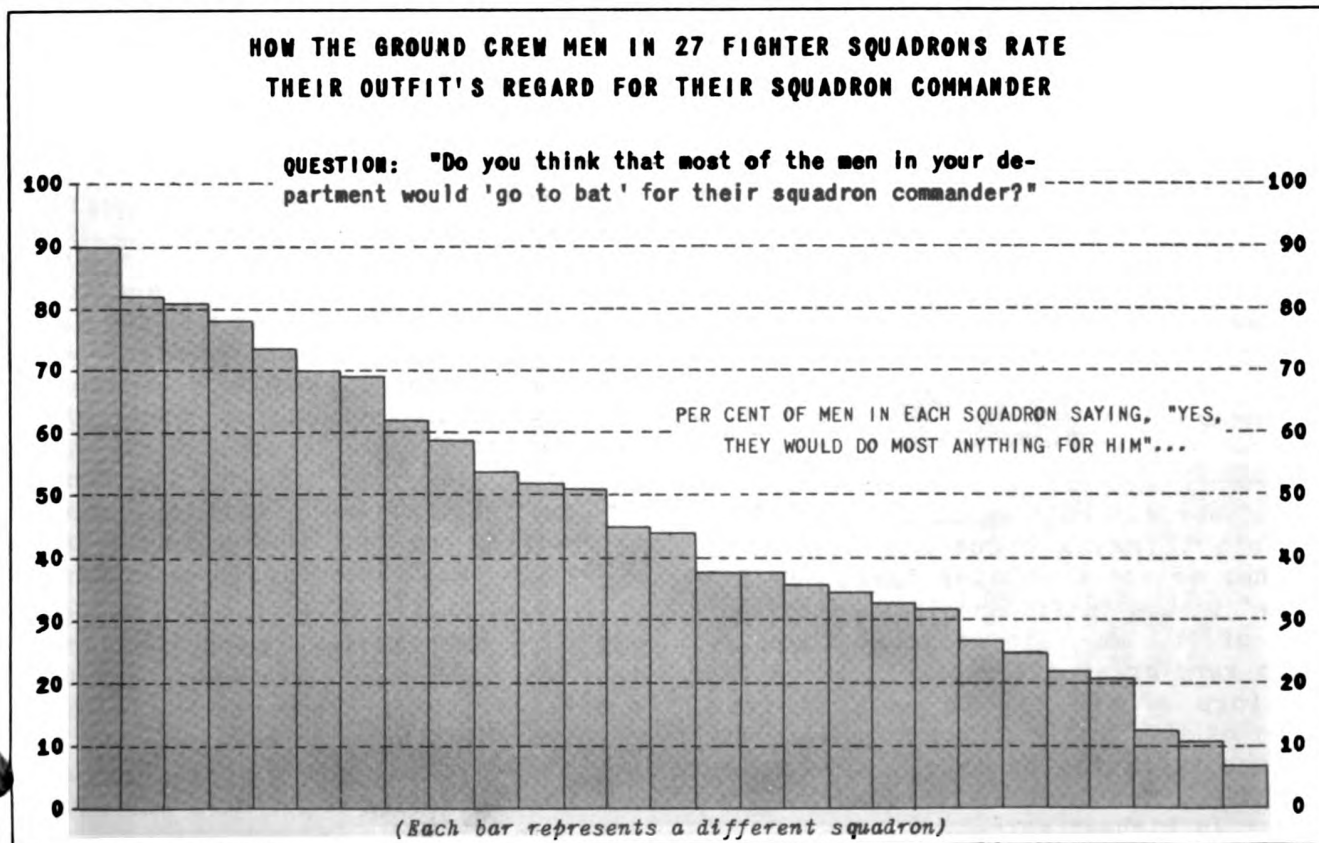
The table below answers the first
part of that question. In 27 different
fighter squadrons in an active theater,
every shade of opinion is found, ranging
from 90 per cent favorable to 7 per cent
favorable to their squadron commanders.

These men are serving under similar
conditions. The planes they are serv-
icing are flying similar missions against
the same enemy. Yet in some squadrons
most of the men say they would go to bat

for their CO, while in others only a
small percentage say they would do so.

While some of these differences may
be attributed to differences in the com-
position of outfits and to external fac-
tors, the figures strongly suggest that
there are real and important differences
in the capacity of various commanders to
win the support of their enlisted men.

When the three squadrons scoring
highest on the question of regard for
their commander are matched against the
three squadrons scoring lowest on the
question, significant differences are
revealed in most of their attitudes
toward their outfit. The charts on the
next page illustrate these differences.



PRIDE IN OUTFIT

In the charts below, the three squadrons rating highest in regard for their squadron commanders are grouped together under Group A; the three rating lowest in regard for their squadron commanders are grouped together under Group B. Here's how they compare on questions related to their attitudes toward their outfits:

QUESTION: "Do you feel proud of your squadron?"

PER CENT OF MEN IN EACH GROUP SAYING,
"VERY PROUD" OR "FAIRLY PROUD"...

GROUP A 93%

GROUP B 77%

A comparable difference between the two groups is evident in their answers to a question asking them to rate their own squadrons in relationship to other squadrons.

QUESTION: "In general, how do you feel your squadron compares with other squadrons that you know about or have heard about?"

PER CENT OF MEN IN EACH GROUP SAYING,
"ONE OF THE VERY BEST" OR
"BETTER THAN MOST OTHERS"...

GROUP A 75%

GROUP B 48%

Another attitude which is related to a man's thinking about his outfit is whether or not a soldier feels he "belongs" in his outfit and is an important part of it. On this attitude there is not a very great difference between the feelings of the men in Group A from those of the men in Group B. What difference there is, however, is in favor of the men who hold their squadron commander in highest esteem.

QUESTION: "Do you feel that you really belong to your squadron and are an important part of it?"

PER CENT OF MEN IN EACH GROUP SAYING,
"VERY MUCH SO" OR "FAIRLY MUCH SO"...

GROUP A 81%

GROUP B 69%

HOW MEN RATE THEIR OUTFIT'S MORALE

As still another index of men's general feelings about their squadrons, they were asked to rate the morale of their buddies. On this question there was a wide difference of opinion between men in the upper and lower groups, with two-thirds of the former and only one-third of the latter rating their squadron's morale as high.

QUESTION: "On the whole, how is the morale of the men in your squadron?"

PER CENT OF MEN IN EACH GROUP SAYING,
"VERY HIGH" OR "FAIRLY HIGH"...

GROUP A 64%

GROUP B 36%

The relationship between men's regard for their squadron commander and their general feeling about their outfits fails to hold up on only one question--and then only because there is virtual unanimity of opinion among them. Ninety-five per cent of the men in Group A say their squadron will play a "very important" or "fairly important" part in winning the war; 89 per cent of the men in Group B say the same about their own squadron.

It is probable that when men say they will "go to bat" for their commander, they are indicating that they both *like* and *respect* him. From the evidence it is apparent that the commander who has his men's liking and respect is in an excellent position to get more and better work out of them.

WHAT OFFICERS THINK OF BATTLE LEADERSHIP

Attitudes of company officers who have led their men against Japanese fire in the South Pacific

Source: A group of several hundred company-grade officers who saw action in the South Pacific.

These are not the views of military theorists or psychologists. They are the views of all of the Infantry and Artillery officers in one division. These officers have one thing in common --the experience of leadership against a treacherous enemy in bitterly contested jungle fighting.

These officers are not in agreement with each other. They differ on many important questions. The differences reflect minor differences in experience as well as differences in mental attitudes.

For example, a highly controversial point is the relationship between an officer's concern for the welfare of

his men and his competence as a combat leader.

Every point of view is reflected in the answers, but two very striking facts are revealed by the proportions.

First, a very large majority of the officers say that officers who are not concerned with the welfare of their men seldom or never are successful combat officers.

Second, three out of four officers have known some officer who was not concerned with the welfare of his men before combat.

Obviously, a majority of the skilled and experienced combat leaders feel there is a definite tie-up between an officer's pre-battle conduct and his success when steel is flying.

CONCERN FOR MEN'S WELFARE AND COMBAT LEADERSHIP

"CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT: Company officers who have showed little concern for the welfare of their men before combat often turn out to be successful leaders of men in battle. What have you observed on this point?"

OUT OF EVERY TWENTY OFFICERS:

ONE SAYS THIS HAPPENS VERY OFTEN

EIGHT SAY THIS HAPPENS, THOUGH NOT VERY OFTEN

SIX SAY THEY NEVER KNEW OF SUCH A CASE

FIVE SAY THEY NEVER KNEW ANY OFFICERS WHO SHOWED LITTLE CONCERN FOR THE WELFARE OF THEIR MEN BEFORE BATTLE



LEADERSHIP PROBLEMS IN COMBAT

The officers were asked to estimate the effect on battle performance of a number of harmful conditions. Those

charted on this page are very closely related to leadership. Those on the following page, though obviously of concern to the commander, are less directly under the control of company officers.

WHAT OFFICERS THINK ABOUT THE EFFECT OF LEADERSHIP SHORTCOMINGS

QUESTION: "...In those instances where our battle performance as you saw it was not quite as good as it might have been, how much do you think each of the factors below contributed?"

LEADERSHIP SHORTCOMINGS

PER CENT OF OFFICERS SAYING EACH ITEM HAD A...

	RATHER BAD OR VERY BAD EFFECT	LITTLE EFFECT	NEVER OBSERVED THIS
Insufficient care for the personal needs of the men.	21%	43%	36%
Poor leadership by noncoms.	20%	45%	35%
Inability of company officers to make mission clear to the men.	19%	31%	50%
Poor judgment by company officers in combat.	18%	35%	47%
Failure of company officers to under- stand orders from above.	18%	34%	48%
Hesitancy of officers to take neces- sary personal risks.	17%	32%	51%
Fear on the part of officers which transmitted itself to the men.	16%	27%	57%
Inadequate training of our troops for combat.	14%	38%	48%

OTHER OBSTACLES TO BATTLE SUCCESS

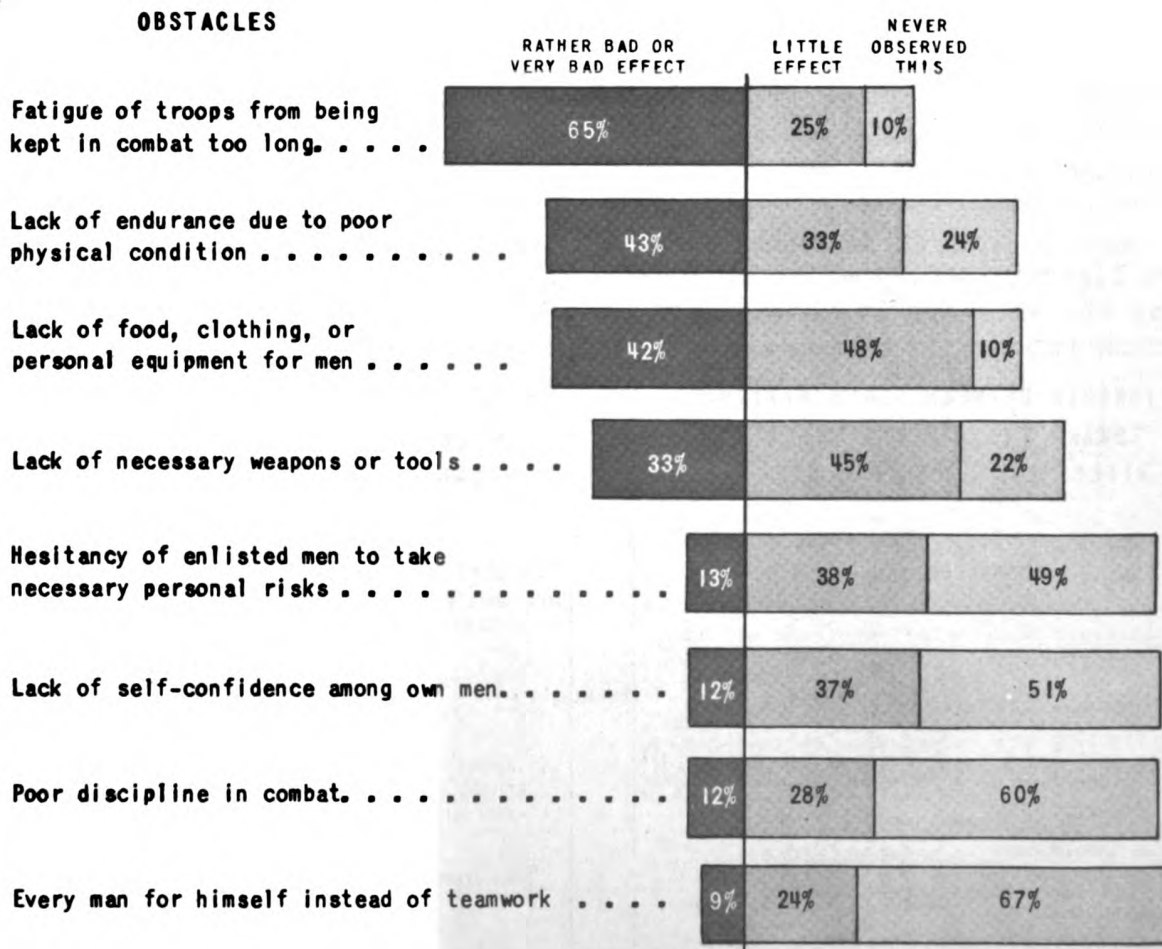
The obstacles to battle success charted below are, of course, the concern and responsibility of leadership. They are, however, a little less closely related to what are usually considered leadership qualities and activities than those charted on the preceding page. It

is noteworthy that the officers are just as unlikely to say that their men's shortcomings have serious effects on battle performance as they are to say that officers' shortcomings do so. Far more officers say that supply and physical condition problems seriously handicap battle performance.

HOW OFFICERS ESTIMATE THE EFFECT OF OBSTACLES TO BATTLE SUCCESS

QUESTION: "...In those instances where our battle performance as you saw it was not quite as good as it might have been, how much do you think each of the facts below contributed?"

PER CENT OF OFFICERS SAYING EACH ITEM HAD A...



MORALE ATTITUDES AND MARKSMANSHIP

High rifle scores are related to men's attitudes toward the war, their self-confidence, and their desire for combat duty

Source: Study of morale-related attitudes and rifle marksmanship scores of a cross section of privates in an Infantry regiment in Continental United States.

Men who want to fight this war to the finish are more likely to be better rifle shots than men who want a negotiated peace now.

Men who believe the U.S. followed the proper course in meeting the enemy on foreign soil instead of just defending its own shores are more likely to be better rifle shots than men who believe we should have confined our fighting to home defense.

Men who prefer combat duty are more likely to be better rifle shots than men who prefer non-combat duty.

Men who rate high in self-confidence are more likely to be better rifle shots than men who rate low in this factor.

These conclusions are borne out by a study of a cross section of privates in an Infantry regiment in the U.S. On the basis of their answers to four questions, § the men were rated on their attitudes toward the war and the kind of peace they want, their self-confidence, and their desire for combat duty. The rifle qualification scores of the men were then matched with these morale-related attitudes. *The results indicate that there is a positive relationship between favorable morale attitudes and good marksmanship (and, conversely, between unfavorable morale attitudes and poor marksmanship).*

In matching the men's morale-related attitudes with their rifle scores, all other factors that were found to influence marksmanship were held constant. Such factors as education, mechanical aptitude, AGCT scores, and age were equalized among the men under consider-

1

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEN'S ATTITUDES TOWARD THE WAR AND THEIR RIFLE MARKSMANSHIP SCORES

PER CENT OF SHARPSHOOTERS AND EXPERTS AMONG MEN WHO...

EACH SYMBOL REPRESENTS 10%

...favor fighting on foreign soil and a fight to the finish



...feel we should have defended our own shores only and favor negotiated peace



2

MEN WHO DESIRE COMBAT DUTY TEND TO BE BETTER SHOTS THAN MEN WHO DESIRE NON-COMBAT DUTY

PER CENT OF SHARPSHOOTERS AND EXPERTS AMONG MEN WHO FAVOR...

EACH SYMBOL REPRESENTS 10%

...combat duty



...non-combat duty

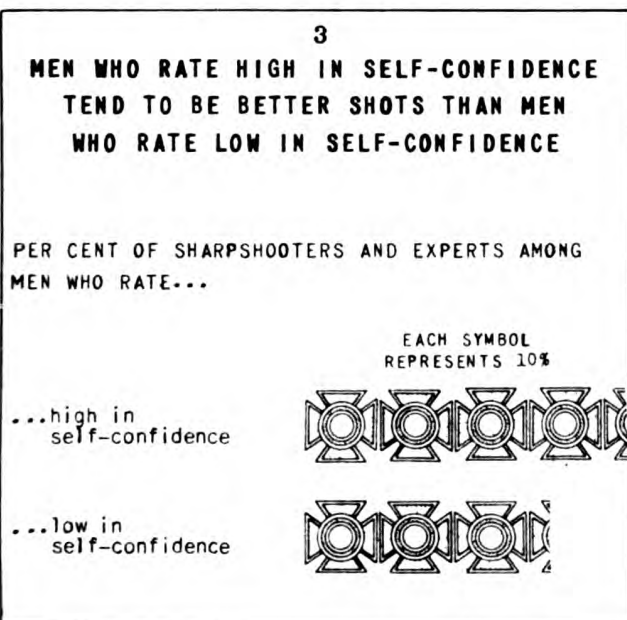


ation. Thus, in each case illustrated in the charts, the data indicates the relationship between specific morale attitudes and performance on the range.

Because a relationship exists between men's morale attitudes and their marksmanship does not necessarily mean that in all cases superior marksmanship is the result of higher morale. It is probable that good marksmanship in itself often tends to improve the men's morale.

For example, it is impossible to determine just how much of the self-confidence of the men who have a great deal of this quality is due to the fine showing they made on the range. Similarly, it is quite probable men's desire for combat duty is influenced in some measure by the fact that they have found themselves to be competent in handling their weapons. It may also be that poor marksmen tend to let their inferior shooting ability affect their self-confidence and desire for combat duty.

This relationship between marksmanship and morale attitudes is less likely to operate on such attitudes as those illustrated in Chart 1, however. The kind of war men endorse and the kind of peace they favor are matters of opinion and it seems logical that they should be more or less immune to the counter influence of rifle scores.



HOW THE DATA WERE OBTAINED

The following are the four questions by which the morale attitudes of the men were determined.

1. "Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: In the long run we probably would have been better off just to defend our own shores and possessions instead of going over to fight the Germans and Japs on foreign soil?"
2. "What do you think we ought to do if the Germans offered to stop fighting now and try to work out a peace in which both sides would have something to say about the terms?"
(In answering, the men could check any of the following alternatives:)
 - a. "We should stop and try to work out peace terms with the Germans now"
 - b. "We should keep on fighting until they are completely crushed"
 - c. "Any other idea?"
 - d. "Undecided"
3. "Do you usually feel sure of yourself when you face new jobs and situations or do you usually have some doubts about your ability to handle them?"

(Men who stated they were "very sure" or "fairly sure" of themselves were considered to be superior in self-confidence to men who said they "usually" had "a few doubts" or "a lot of doubts.")

4. "If you should have to make the following choice when you finish your training, which would you choose:

Duty in a combat outfit--either in the U.S. or overseas

or

Duty in a non-combat outfit--either in the U.S. or overseas?"

The data in Chart I combines the attitudes of men as expressed in answers to the first two questions.

WHAT THE SOLDIER THINKS ABOUT THE ORIENTATION COURSE

Officers and enlisted men are strong supporters of the orientation program

Source: Study of a cross section of company officers and enlisted men in three Infantry divisions in Continental United States.

Officers and enlisted men are almost universally convinced of the need for and the over-all objectives of the Army Orientation Course. That they are in hearty agreement with the objectives of

the course can readily be seen from a study of how a cross section of company officers and enlisted men in three Infantry divisions rated the importance of three of these objectives.

A majority of both officers and men say that all three of the objectives are absolutely necessary to enlisted men.

IMPORTANCE OF THREE ORIENTATION COURSE OBJECTIVES

Importance to enlisted men of:

HAVING A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF THE THINGS
THEY ARE FIGHTING FOR.

PERCENTAGE SAYING OBJECTIVES WERE...

ABSOLUTELY
NECESSARY

OF GREAT
IMPORTANCE

OF MEDIUM,
LITTLE OR NO
IMPORTANCE

OFFICERS.

62%

31%

7

ENLISTED MEN.

74%

25%

HAVING A FEELING OF PRIDE IN THEIR OUTFIT.

OFFICERS.

65%

34%

ENLISTED MEN.

55%

40%

5

FEELING THEIR OUTFIT HAS A VITAL MISSION.

OFFICERS.

61%

35%

4

ENLISTED MEN.

52%

43%

5

ARE ORIENTATION NEEDS BEING MET?

Despite the fact that over half the officers and enlisted men agree that these objectives are "absolutely necessary" to enlisted men and that almost all of the rest regard them as "of great importance," results of the survey indi-

cate that in many cases the orientation needs of soldiers are not being met. A sizeable minority of both officers and men, for example, sometimes doubt the worthwhileness of the war. Three-fifths of the men and two-fifths of the officers are no better than lukewarm in their pride in outfit.

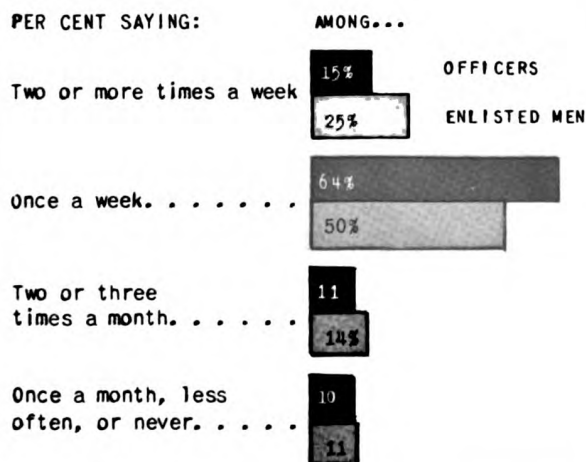
War Department Memorandum W350-28-43 paragraph 6a: "At least once a week of-
ficers will discuss informally with their
men the current news and its meaning in
all units within the Continental United
States." Despite this recommendation,
studies have borne out the fact that in
many outfits discussions of current news
and its meaning are being held as seldom
as once a month.

OPINIONS OF OFFICERS AND MEN ON HOW DISCUSSION MEETINGS SHOULD BE CONDUCTED

Officers and men have definite ideas
on the conduct of meetings for discussing
current news and the progress of the war.
Roughly two-thirds of both groups favor
meetings consisting of talks followed by
discussion as against talks without dis-
cussion or group discussion.

Four out of five officers and three
out of four enlisted men recommend as-
sembling for discussion once a week or
more often. This recommendation is in
agreement with the "at least once a week"
rule set down in Memorandum W350-28-43.

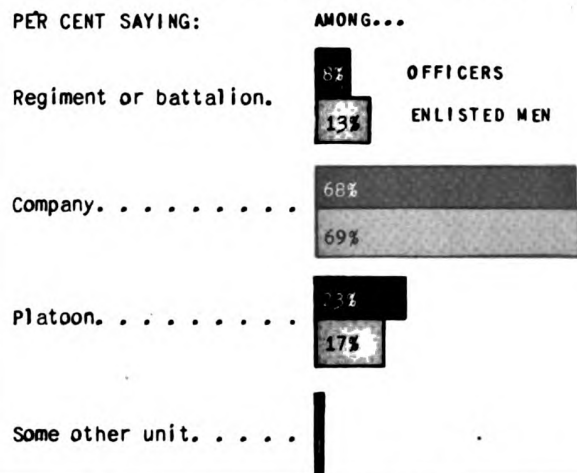
QUESTION: "About how often do you think the men
should be assembled during training hours for
talks on current events and the progress of the
war?"



HOW LARGE A GROUP?

As the chart at the top of the next column shows, more than two-thirds of both officers and men favor the company as the unit to be assembled for discussion.

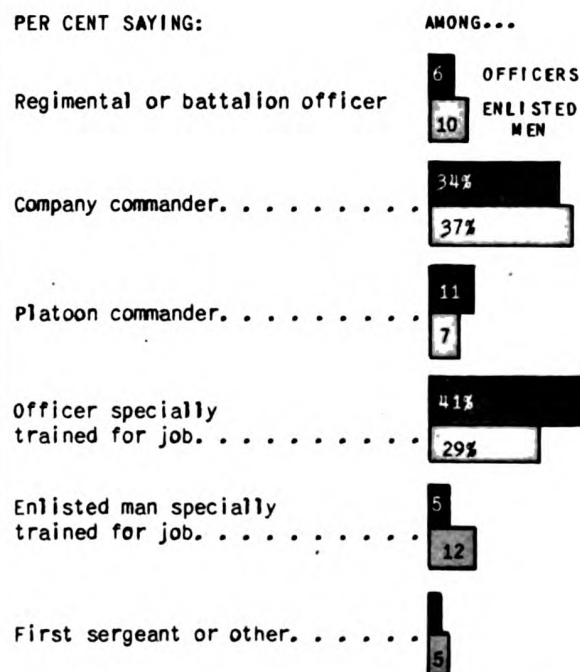
QUESTION: "How large a unit do you think should be assembled at one time for regularly scheduled talks or discussions during training hours about current events and the progress of the war?"



WHO SHOULD LEAD THE GROUP

There is wide variation among both officers and men on the question of just who would make the best leader of the current events and discussion assemblies. Among leaders suggested, the company commander and a specially trained officer are most often mentioned.

QUESTION: "Suppose that the men in your outfit are to be included in weekly assemblies for talks or discussions on current events and the progress of the war, who do you think should lead these assemblies?"



WHAT SUBJECTS SHOULD BE DISCUSSED?

Officers and enlisted men were given a checklist of various subjects recommended for discussion at orientation assemblies and asked to check the three

subjects they considered most important. Both groups tend to agree in general on the importance they attach to most subjects, but enlisted men are somewhat more likely to express interest in post-war topics than are officers.

QUESTION: "If you were made responsible for a program to inform enlisted men in your outfit about current events and the progress of the war, what subjects would you consider most important?"

SUBJECTS RELATED TO CURRENT NEWS

PER CENT OF INDIVIDUALS NAMING EACH SUBJECT:§

	AMONG OFFICERS	AMONG ENLISTED MEN
The progress of the campaign in the Pacific.	30%	28%
The progress of the campaign in Italy.	27%	16%
What is happening inside the Nazi-occupied countries	13%	15%

SUBJECTS RELATED TO POST-WAR PROBLEMS

	AMONG OFFICERS	AMONG ENLISTED MEN
America's part in world affairs after the war.	26%	36%
What America will be like after the war.	11%	24%
What should be done with Germany after the war	6%	26%

OTHER SUBJECTS

	AMONG OFFICERS	AMONG ENLISTED MEN
The part your outfit plays in helping to win the war	42%	34%
The over-all strategy of the United Nations.	42%	23%
What we are fighting for in this war	38%	25%
News about the record outfits from your branch of service are making in overseas operations	34%	16%
How air and ground forces compare in importance in winning the war	14%	31%
Other.		

§Percentages do not add to 300 per cent since some officers and men did not name three subjects.

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Back numbers of issues of What The Soldier Thinks can be obtained through channels from AGO Distribution Branch, Washington, D.C.

HOW THE STUDIES ARE MADE

The articles in this bulletin are based on attitude surveys conducted by the Research Branch, Morale Services Division and the research units reporting to the commanding generals of the several theaters.

The staff of the Research Branch is composed of Army officers who are experienced in the field of surveys, together with a number of civilian specialists. Techniques have been developed, tested and adjusted to fit the Army's problems.

The basic steps in conducting a study are as follows:

1. The questionnaire is prepared in consultation with the War Department branches, or the theater command immediately concerned. Questions are carefully chosen to provide the exact type of information desired.
2. The questionnaire is pre-tested. That is, the questions are tried out on small groups of men to determine whether they are meaningful and understandable to the type of men or officers to be studied.
3. The project is cleared for action with the commands in which the study is to be made.
4. The number of men to be surveyed is set sufficiently large to insure statistically reliable findings.
5. The men to be surveyed are selected to insure as true a cross section of the group to be studied as possible. A cross section of enlisted men in the United States, for example, is so drawn as to give proper proportionate representation to each branch of the Army, to men in each stage of training, and to men stationed in the various sections of the country. It is, of course, possible to get cross sections of a single branch, of a division, of Negro troops, or any other portion of the Army desired.
6. The men complete questionnaires under conditions of absolute anonymity. They are assembled in small groups, and hear a short introduction given by a specially trained class leader. This introduction makes it clear to the men that only their frank opinion is wanted, and that they are not being tested or spied on. If the group is composed of enlisted men, the class leader is an enlisted man, and no officers are present during the session. No names or serial numbers are placed on the questionnaires. Ordinarily, illiterates or men of very low intelligence are interviewed by specially trained enlisted men.
7. The data are analyzed by specialists in attitude research analysis. Reports of these analysts are released to agencies concerned, and also form the basis for the material presented in this bulletin.

The procedure outlined above is that followed in the typical cross section survey. Other techniques, of course, are employed from time to time in special situations.